(c) what are the export projections for rice for the Ninth Five Year Plan, both basmati and non-basmati, in terms of quantity and value?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) The exports of rice including non-basmati rice depend upon the international demand and supply position, prices prevailing in the international and domestic markets, consumer preferences, different varieties traded, variation in quality and other terms of trade.

(b) India's credibility is adversly affected when supplies are undependable.

(c) The export projections for the Ninth Five Year Plan have not been formulated.

Financial assistance to rubber marketing federation

2151. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a request from the Kerala Government for financial assistance of Rs. 100 crores to the Rubber Marketing Federation; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's decision thereon?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Dumping of Titanium Dioxide

2152. SHRI J.CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that certain multi-national companies are dumping Titanium dioxide in India and they sell the same at very low costs;

(b) whether Government are aware that this dumping along with the reduction in import duty from 85% in 1991 to 40% now are leading to the ruin of the two Kerala State owned public sector industries, Titanium products and KMML; and

(c) the necessary steps Government propose to take to save these industrial units?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Government has not received any petition requesting for levy of anti-dumping duty on Titanium dioxide, nor has the domestic industry indicated any injury on account of the alleged dumped imports.

(c) Question does not arise.

Import of Items under OGL

2153. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether hundreds of import items were recently put on OGL;

(b) their complete list;

(c) the rationals for this policy;

(d) how much of a drain on our foreign exchange this OGL Policy is likely to be; and

(e) what will be impact of these liberalised imports on production and employment within the country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) 340 items have been shifted from the Restricted list to the Free list of imports with effect from 13.04.98. List of these 340 items is attached. [*See* Appendix 184, Annexure No 66]

(c) Quantitative restrictions have to be gradually phased out by the year 2003 as per the Agreements entered into with the trading partners.

(d) The volume of import in respect of items put in the free list is not expected to be significant as judged by last year's import trends. However, the actual outgo of foreign exchange would be known only after watching the trend of actual imports for a period of atleast one year.